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ABSTRACT

This paper describes the Programme for Home-Based Community Day Care, a training program undertaken by the Colombian Family Welfare Institute. The program offers training and support to mothers so that they can each care in their homes for up to 15 children from the local community. Now in its sixth year, the project reaches nearly 1 million children, or about 83 percent of all children living in poverty in Colombia. The paper describes the program in detail, examining the means used to tie communities into the initiative, the role of government and nongovernment organizations, and the activities of mothers, assistants, parent associations, and public officials. It also reviews studies that document the program's positive effect on the health, nutrition, and psychological and emotional well-being of the children involved, noting that: (1) the supervision provided through the community day care homes allows women to dedicate more time to jobs that augment the incomes of their families; and (2) the educational element of the program helps to enrich the relationships between adults and children and generate a social and cultural environment more favorable to children. The program's compliance with the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child is also discussed. An appendix outlines program costs. (MDM)

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INTERNATIONAL CHILD DEVELOPMENT CENTRE

HOME-BASED COMMUNITY DAY CARE AND CHILDREN'S RIGHTS: THE COLOMBIAN CASE*

Carlos Castillo Cardona
Nelson Ortiz Pinilla
Alejandra González Rossetti

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* This is the English version of a paper originally published in Spanish by the UNICEF International Child Development Centre.

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Changes in the structure of the family, the increasing presence of women in the labour force and new understanding of child development have made the need to devise ways to provide day care outside the home for 3-to-6-year-olds more urgent. Universal coverage in day care for this age group has not always been possible in either developing or developed countries through the use of standard approaches, since these approaches require highly skilled personnel, major investments in infrastructure and significant outlays for day-to-day operations.

In response to this situation, the Colombian Family Welfare Institute (ICBF) has undertaken an unconventional programme for home-based community day care. Now in its sixth year, the programme reaches approximately one million children, or about 83 percent of all children living in poverty in Colombia. The programme offers mothers training and support so that they can each care in their homes for up to 15 children from the local community.

This paper describes the programme in detail: the means used to tie communities into the initiative, the role of government and nongovernment organizations and the activities of the mothers, assistants, parent associations and public officials involved.

Studies have demonstrated the programme's positive effect on the health, nutrition and psychological and emotional well-being of children. The supervision provided through the community day care "homes" allows women to dedicate more time to jobs and thus augment the incomes of their families. The educational element of the programme helps to enrich relationships between adults and children and generate a social and cultural environment more favourable to children.

Because of these features, the programme is in compliance with the Convention on the Rights of the Child, especially those articles of the convention concerning the protection and welfare of children. The financial mechanisms used to implement the programme are particularly important in terms of Article 4, through which the signatory nations agree to employ on behalf of children all available resources to the fullest. The mobilization of resources and the participation of communities have enabled the ICBF, the entity which administers the programme, to share the responsibility for financing with participating public institutions, the business sector, labour unions, nongovernment organizations and local communities. Because of this method of financing, the ICBF is covering only 38 percent of the total cost of the programme.

This paper outlines the reasons for the success of the programme, including previous experiences in the country and of the ICBF with day care, political compromise and commitment, the mobilization of all levels of society, the programme's broad coverage and rapid expansion, the financial contributions of various groups, the holistic approach to care, the development of alternative methods for the provision of day care, community participation, respect for cultural differences and mechanisms to supply evaluation, technical support and on-going training.

The success of the Programme for Home-based Community Day Care has improved the standing of the ICBF in communities not usually benefiting from services of this type, and it has led to the design of an even more ambitious strategy for day care for all under-7-year-olds that is based on a variety of techniques. The new strategy may yet guarantee that day care will become available for all poor children in Colombia.

Other countries have shown an interest in implementing similar programmes adapted to their particular social and cultural circumstances and characteristics.

"Home-based community day care" is an initiative for preschool day care in Colombia that has sparked the interest of many countries and international organizations. Now in its sixth year, the initiative benefits approximately one million 2-to-7-year-olds. It is based on the idea that a woman, in her own home and assisted by a trained specialist, can provide day care for 15 children in her neighbourhood. Parents and other local people participating actively in the operation of the day care "homes". Costs are assumed by various public agencies, the private sector and the communities. Children receive special care in health, nutrition and psychological and emotional development and are supervised while their parents are at work. Parents and communities acquire a better understanding of child care.

Evaluations indicate the programme has had a positive impact. The programme is also important as an example of one way to recognize the rights of children.

The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child, which was adopted in 1989 and has now been ratified by 130 nations, is perhaps the most serious and significant commitment ever undertaken for the benefit of children. Yet, the enthusiasm it has kindled could easily turn to disappointment as the difficulties and barriers become apparent in the observance of the convention, particularly in developing countries. One of the most obvious problems is the application of Article 4, which stipulates with regard to economic, social and cultural rights that signatory states shall undertake pertinent measures "*to the maximum extent of their available resources and, where needed, within the framework of international cooperation*".[1]

The Convention on the Rights of the Child was adopted at the close of the 1980s, which has been described as a decade "ill fated for most of the developing world".[2] During that decade real income fell by approximately 10 percent in Latin America (the drop was much greater among the poor) and 25 percent in Africa. In most developing countries this economic downturn spelled cutbacks in the resources available to families and governments to meet the needs of children and other vulnerable groups. Meanwhile, many developed countries were experiencing growing pressure to reduce their foreign economic assistance. And in some instances there was a movement to channel aid toward nations in which donors had special economic and political interests, regardless of the real needs of the poor nations. Indeed, it has been estimated that only 10 percent of all international aid is used to satisfy basic needs.[3]

UNICEF and many of its friends have long argued that even the poorest of countries can fulfil the needs of children. UNICEF has stressed the necessity for change: "The moment has come to abandon in disgrace the notion that our world cannot allow itself to supply the basic needs of all men, women, boys and girls with regard to adequate nutrition, clean water,

primary health care, family planning and basic education."[4] If this is the time for change, then let the good news reach the needy through implementation of the Convention on the Rights of the Child, both within countries and internationally.

There will always be doubters. Even history has not always agreed, at least over the short term, with those who say that whatever is right and good will eventually be realized. Added support and more powerful arguments are therefore needed to turn the tide of indifference and persuade the skeptics.

The UNICEF International Child Development Centre is taking steps to circulate the growing evidence indicating that signatory nations can achieve the minimum goals and, more gradually, some of the most challenging objectives of the convention.[5]

Some believe that the convention's articles on early childhood care and development are too ambitious for Third World countries. Even the wealthiest nations fall short of full compliance in this area. However, recent studies of experiences in various Third World countries show that some early childhood development programmes are effective and can be adequately financed.[6]

The home-based day care programme is especially important as an example of one way to implement the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child. Within the limitations common to all programmes, the day care "homes" are a direct fulfilment of the convention's preamble, which refers to children's need for and right to special care and assistance. The efforts of the Colombian Government to mobilize the financial, material and human resources of communities and public and private organizations for the programme represent an important step toward compliance with Article 4 of the convention.

The initiative satisfies the obligations laid out in other articles as well, including Article 3 on the responsibility of states to guarantee that institutions charged with the care and protection of children maintain adequate standards, Article 6 on the duty to assure to the utmost the survival and development of children, Article 18 on child care and working parents, Article 24 on health, nutrition and development, Article 27 on physical, mental, spiritual, moral and social development, as well as on the responsibility of parents for the welfare of their children, Article 28 on education, and Article 29 on the development to the fullest of a child's personality, talents and physical and mental abilities.

The programme's day care homes are significant in terms of the convention in that they meet the needs outlined in several articles. Moreover, through efforts undertaken along with parents and communities, the programme has had a strong impact on society and is

contributing to the establishment of a healthier social environment favourable to children. In turn, this social environment more favourable to children is generating greater awareness of children's problems and more responsiveness to other ideas contained in the convention.

I. INTRODUCTION

Colombia is located in the northern part of South America. It has a population of 33 million people, most of whom live in the highlands and along the nation's two seacoasts. Despite centuries of racial mixing among indians, negroes and Europeans of Spanish origin, Colombia still maintains a myriad of cultures. Because of rapid urbanization over the last 30 years, cities now account for 70 percent of the total population. Thanks to industrial expansion, Colombia is counted among the medium-growth countries of Latin America.

During recent decades the people of Colombia have tried hard to achieve a modern economy and accelerate social development. The infant mortality rate fell from 74.1 deaths per 1,000 live births in 1971 to 39.6 per 1,000 in 1990. The overall rate of child malnutrition declined from 19.4 percent in 1980 to 13.1 percent in 1990. The incidence of preventible disease has dropped as well, because of a reinforced national health system and an increase in vaccination coverage to between 82 percent (measles) and 95 percent (tuberculosis). The average woman of childbearing age was raising 2.9 children in 1990 compared to 4.6 children in 1973.

There are 5.7 million children under 7 years of age in Colombia. Of these, 43 percent are living in poverty, and 24 percent are living under especially miserable conditions. Under-7-year-olds who are poor represent one of the most vulnerable segments of the population. Malnutrition and inadequate services in health care and education, along with neglect, abuse and total or partial child abandonment, are features of the socioeconomic and cultural environment in which many children are now living.

Despite the efforts to improve living conditions, enormous gaps still exist among the various levels of Colombian society. Infant mortality rates offer an example. While the infant mortality rate is 35.1 per 1,000 live births among the relatively more well-off, it is 56.3 per 1,000 among the poor segments of the

population. Indeed, 61.3 of every 1,000 infants born to the poorest Colombians die when they are still under one year of age.[7]

During the 1940s and 50s Colombia was plagued by a virtual civil war brought on by conflict between the two traditional political parties. To establish peace, the two parties agreed to share power equally within the administration of government and occupy the presidency on an alternating basis for a period of 16 years. However, the violence did not end but merely took on new forms. Colombia now suffers from the violence spawned by guerrilla movements, paramilitary groups and the drug cartels. It was once estimated that 30 percent of the population was living in a situation of armed conflict; the figure may be even higher today.[8] Crime rates are also high, and violent death is the second major cause of death in the country.

Unlike Venezuela and Ecuador, Colombia has not experienced an oil boom. Nor has it ever benefited from efforts to develop natural resources for the world market. Rather, the country has had to learn to manage poverty. In the late 1950s a community action initiative was set in motion that, despite a variety of shortcomings, has evolved into a nationwide network for the election of political leaders, the allocation of financing, the organization of manpower and numerous other efforts of benefit to communities. This process has come to include the creation of local government councils, which are composed of popularly elected community leaders and plan and manage public works projects in cooperation with local and central government authorities. The projects range from construction to the supervision of health care and education systems.

The Colombian people have also gained valuable experience in primary health care, the improvement of rural schools and community-based efforts to raise living conditions in areas of the country especially hard-hit by violence.[9] Social sector indicators for Colombia, such as those which measure access to health care institutions, are nonetheless below the levels for nations with average rates of mortality.[10] However, public agencies exist throughout the country and represent an institutional network sufficient for the realization of nationwide initiatives.

During the 1980s, when the Programme for Home-based Community Day Care was inaugurated, Colombia was enjoying economic growth which was exceptional relative to that of the region as a whole. Indeed, Colombia was the only nation in Latin America registering positive economic growth. Gross domestic product was

rising an average 3.5 percent annually. Moderate in comparison to that in other countries of the region, inflation in Colombia fluctuated between 16.6 percent in 1983 and 28.1 percent in 1988.

Unfortunately, the boom did not last. In response to economic recession, the Government was obliged to adopt adjustment policies in 1990. The policies were aimed at reducing domestic consumption, liberalizing foreign trade, reforming the fiscal sector, privatizing many public services and decentralizing government by giving local officials more authority. These policies have been accompanied by an overall liberalization of the economy designed to make Colombian products more competitive abroad. To offset any negative effects of these structural reforms, the Government has been attempting to concentrate social spending on education, health care and income generation, while assigning priority to assistance for the poorest segments of the population. Nonetheless, the achievement of this priority has been hampered by the demands of adjustment and the struggle against drugs and violence.

II. THE BACKGROUND OF COMMUNITY DAY CARE

The Colombian Family Welfare Institute is a public agency of the Ministry of Health. It enjoys administrative independence and manages its own assets. The ICBF is charged with protecting minors and improving living standards among families. With regional offices in Colombia's 33 departmental and provincial capitals, the ICBF serves the entire country. These offices are supported by "zone centres", which assure training, planning, management and supervision for the day care homes.

Prior to the creation of the ICBF, all public and private sector enterprises with more than 50 employees or with enough capital to qualify as part of the modern economy were required by labour laws to provide day care or kindergarten facilities for the children of their workers. Some companies hired specialists to supply high-quality child care. However, for lack of capacity, most companies failed to comply with the laws. As a result, many of the children of workers in the formal sector and most of the children of workers in the informal sector or of the unemployed had no access to day care. Few children could be cared for through the limited programmes the ICBF was able to finance using Government allocations.

In an effort to remedy this situation, in 1974 the Government lifted the requirement on companies to establish kindergartens or day care centres at the work place. In exchange, employers in the modern sector of the economy had to contribute to the ICBF the equivalent of 2 percent of their payroll.[11] Strengthened by these resources and the financial support it received from the Government, the ICBF began to provide day care for under-7-year-olds. However, the new service continued to be viewed as a benefit offered to workers and not as a means for the Government to assist the poor. Employers were freed from the duty of constructing day care centres, and the door could be opened a little for children whose parents worked in the informal sector or were unemployed, although these people did not contribute to the ICBF. Thus, the new system represented a change in the way the state dealt with the poor, but the approach was still conventional. The ICBF continued to rely on a type of kindergarten that would have been more suited to a developed country. These kindergartens were expensive to build and operate, but they were not at all adapted to the local surroundings. Children could hardly fail to notice the huge contrast between their kindergartens and their homes.

Only during the following decade did the ICBF modify the definition of its target population to include groups not working in the formal sector of the economy. Yet, resources remained limited, and the high cost of kindergartens and the difficulties inherent in any attempt to reach the poorest of the poor meant that the children most in need were unintentionally marginalized even further. In order to adapt to local conditions and better serve local populations, the ICBF established Comprehensive Preschool Care Centres (CAIPs). These centres offered day care but also health care and schooling. To create the centres, the ICBF had to acquire or build new facilities. The centres were spacious and well equipped. Large professional staffs were hired, and the ratio between staff members and children rose substantially. Thus, despite some improvements, the traditional concept of the kindergarten was still being followed. The proportion of skilled professionals among all personnel was high, and operating costs were excessive. Despite a reputation for quality, the centres achieved only limited coverage and did not necessarily serve the poorest children.

The high rates of malnutrition among children revealed by a study of poverty in Colombia that was conducted at the beginning of the Administration of President

Virgilio Barco (August 1986 to August 1990) forced the Government to reexamine its approach so as to find a successful way to supplement the diets of the nation's most disadvantaged children.[12] Because research had shown that traditional methods of distributing dietary supplements were inadequate, the Government decided to create a new programme which would serve several purposes. In February 1987 it therefore gave the ICBF responsibility for the establishment of a new system for preschool day care, the Programme for Home-based Community Day Care. This was the first time a nonformal but wide-ranging service of this sort had ever been planned in Colombia, and the more formal approach which the ICBF had previously adopted in its child care programmes had to be changed.

The day care "homes" represented a new weapon in the war on poverty, and the programme quickly became a top Government priority. The service reached 122,000 children during the first year alone. This altered the overall profile of the ICBF's target population, since most of the parents of these children were employed in the informal sector of the economy. Indeed, according to a study in 1991-2, the incomes of more than 70 percent of the families in the programme came from the informal sector. Thus, the initiative had succeeded in overcoming a very difficult barrier for any such programme: it was reaching those most in need. In a very short time it became a key strategy in the effort to foster a greater measure of social equity.

The programme's initial, impressive achievements, rapid expansion and usefulness in the war on poverty gave the Government a new chip in its negotiations with labour and business, both of which were (and still are) represented on the ICBF managing board. Because labour and business leaders were active in the modern sector of the economy, their prime concern was to assure that resources tended to be allocated to programmes aimed at the children of formal-sector workers. However, the Government was determined to combat poverty and end the violence associated with poverty, and it managed to wrangle from employers acceptance of an increase in their ICBF contributions to an amount equivalent to 3 percent of payroll, up from 2 percent.[13] The extra 1 percent was exclusively earmarked for the day care homes. This guaranteed that the programme enjoyed greater economic and political stability and more institutional support.

Other factors have also been involved in the rapid success and expansion of the programme:

- Starting in 1988, with the assistance of UNICEF, community-based methods of preschool care were tested. In numerous cases mothers and other local residents in various communities throughout Colombia undertook ICBF-sponsored programmes. Though limited in coverage, these initiatives demonstrated the conceptual, methodological and operational advantages of community participation in programme management. They had a relatively greater social, political and economic impact and provided the ICBF with a proving ground for many important features of the Programme for Home-based Community Day Care.

- The ICBF was also able to draw on the ingenious approaches developed on a smaller scale in other countries. For example, a day care programme undertaken in Venezuela during the late 1970s could rely on 2,500 "homes" by 1978. However, the programme suffered during the two subsequent presidential administrations, and many of the homes ceased to be available. In 1990, under a new Administration, responsibility for the programme was handed back to the developers of the original initiative, which acquired new strength. Today, the programme is supported by 14,000 homes, where day care is provided for 140,000 children.

Ecuador began in 1989 to search for a strategy for comprehensive preschool care founded on a variety of models, including day care in homes. Although the programme counted on only a few homes at the start, it involved intense efforts at the creation of the necessary skills in training, management and planning. Expertise and instruction materials on early childhood development and child nutrition and health were also developed. Several years later, in 1988-92, this groundwork made it possible to expand the programme's coverage to an estimated 200,000 children.

- Another important factor which undoubtedly contributed to the expansion of home-based day care in Colombia was favourable public sentiment. Such a sentiment can be expressed in many ways. However, despite the country's myriad social problems and very high rates of violence and poverty, the Government managed to draft and win passage for the National Code on Minors of 1989. This law was inspired by versions of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child that were available before the final approval of the convention by the UN General Assembly. Colombia was one of the first nations to ratify the convention.

A campaign to publicize and protect child rights was then launched in 1991 by the office of the president of Colombia, in cooperation with Government ministries

and the private sector. The nationwide campaign relied heavily on the media, fired classroom discussion and public debate and led to a strengthening of neighbourhood and community groups already active in promoting children's rights. Thanks to the receptive mood fostered by the campaign, as well as the support of many politicians, the rights of children were included among the fundamental rights recognized in the new national Constitution then in the process of being written and adopted.

These several phenomena demonstrate that a determined and clear voice in favour of children can be heard in Colombia. Though not an offshoot of the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child, the Programme for Home-based Community Day Care certainly reflects the spirit of that document.

III. THE PURPOSE OF DAY CARE HOMES

The overall goal of the day care homes is to offer extremely poor under-7-year-olds an opportunity to develop harmoniously. Harmonious development implies balanced emotional and psychological growth, proper nutrition and good health care. It can be achieved through steady concern for the needs of the child and the existence of a family and community environment which nurtures such concern. In pursuit of this goal, several approaches have been adopted in the programme:

- Sound *psychological and social development* is encouraged in the child through educational activities designed to stimulate the child's awareness and foster understanding among the child, the family and the community.

- Good *nutrition* among under-7-year-olds is spurred through the distribution of food supplements which supply 50 to 70 percent of the daily allowance of vitamins recommended for this age group; growth monitoring is encouraged, and the programme suggests alternatives for better diets.

- *Health care* is bolstered by bringing children into programmes of the national health system and other relevant agencies.

- *Day care* is provided for the children of working parents, thus helping the latter become better integrated into the labour force.

- The *educational and social environment* of children is reinforced by strengthening the family, raising the capacity of parents and the community in general to deal with the learning

processes involved in activities in which children participate, improving the living conditions of the families associated with the programme, supporting community participation and assisting families in boosting their incomes.

IV. THE INITIAL STRATEGIES

The Programme for Home-based Community Day Care, created by the ICBF to overcome shortcomings in the Comprehensive Preschool Care Centre system (see earlier), has represented a radical change in the way child care is conceived in Colombia. Several important strategies have been developed for this initiative:

- The programme relies on the *participation and infrastructure of communities* in its efforts to improve the daily lives of the population, establish better relationships between adults and children, encourage more sensitive lifestyles, apply a decentralized approach and increase the civic, social and administrative responsibilities of communities. The community becomes a major player rather than a passive user. It acquires duties, makes decisions and undertakes its own initiatives within a process of social development and change. Community participation reduces government paternalism by allowing local people the chance to play their proper role and accomplish objectives in conjunction with the state. It strengthens the foundations of democracy, bolsters institutional legitimacy, renders decentralization feasible and helps social programmes achieve broader coverage. Community participation responds to the right of people to make the decisions which affect their lives.

- Programme initiatives have been based on *coordination* among government and nongovernment organizations, volunteers, educational institutions and entities which are able to assist local populations. A community can thus control its own resources and yet apply them more efficiently by adding them to those of other groups. This strategy helps focus the initiatives of institutions, so that they can become integrated within a plan of action, and avoids duplication of effort and the adoption of disorganized, uncoordinated approaches.

- *On-going training*, whether provided directly on-site or indirectly via advanced technologies, is being carried out through the creation of "work-study" groups within regions and at the local level. Administrators, the mothers caring for children in their homes, parents and neighbours, as well as the children, are thus offered the opportunity to develop a store of theoretical and practical knowledge about children, the family and the community.

- Wherever the programme is implemented, *advisory and monitoring services* are provided in order to foster constant reflection and evaluation. The advisory services are supplied by experts from the ICBF and the institutions of the National Family Welfare System.[14] They are run in cooperation with academic centres and relevant government and nongovernment organizations.

- In order to develop a healthy personality and self-image, a child must interact with an adult who has a good self-image and a well-balanced personality. The *participation of parents* in the programme means that these people can learn much about human development that will help them better understand what is involved in the proper development of their own children. Likewise, once trained, the mothers who open their homes to provide day care for children can also play a very important role in the development of these children.

These several strategies have been designed to accomplish three crucial goals: the optimum use of resources to assure broader coverage at lower cost, the expansion of efforts to educate parents and communities so that the impact of education is greater and longer lasting and the transformation of the social environment for the benefit of children. These strategies, coupled with rapid growth and a significant impact, have allowed the Programme for Home-based Community Day Care to become a model for success.[15]

V. THE PROGRAMME PARTICIPANTS AND THEIR TASKS

ICBF staff, staff from other institutions, representatives from parent associations, the mothers and fathers of the children involved in the programme, the "day care" mothers and their assistants, volunteers from nongovernment organizations and the children themselves are the main participants in the programme.

The Role of the Community

The residents of communities have undertaken a wide variety of initiatives within the programme. Indeed, these community initiatives dominate among all programme initiatives.

1. *"Community Mothers" and their Auxiliaries.* Each day care "home" is the house of a local mother who, assisted by an auxiliary, provides care for 15 neighbourhood children. These "community mothers" have been specially trained and receive loans to adapt their dwellings

to the needs of child care. Every day each child is given one meal and two snacks that together supply 50 to 60 percent of average daily nutritional needs. The activities which take place in the home are designed to foster social maturity, the formation of healthy personalities and intellectual and cerebral-motor development. Health workers visit the homes regularly to monitor the health and development of the children. The homes are open for day care every weekday during the eight hours when parents are at their jobs.

The quality of the care furnished by the mothers is due, among other factors, to the training made possible by the ICBF, the natural disposition of the mothers and the programming and supervision offered by the ICBF. The outcome of these efforts also depends on the type of housing, the amount of space available for the children and the nutrition supplements and the stimulation the children receive.

2. *Parents and Parent Associations.* Neighbourhood parent associations have been formed in order to organize and supervise the day care homes. These associations administer the financial assistance of the ICBF for the homes, organize the purchase of food for the daily meals and snacks, remain in close contact with the day care mothers in order to monitor the homes, and plan other activities of benefit to local residents. The associations also receive special instruction in child care and development.

In addition to paying a monthly cash fee, participating parents are required to perform volunteer clerical work for the day care service through the parent associations. The parent associations use the Government financial support to meet the cost of food and the allowances and home-improvement loans for the day care mothers.

3. *The Day Care Homes.* The day care homes are responsible for carrying out special activities with the children. These activities are called "educational moments" and are designed to stimulate child development. They are not part of a strict routine, but the day care mothers are trained to seek opportunities to introduce them. The ICBF encourages the mothers to be creative. The "educational moments" are:

- "Welcome Time": the children tell each other about recent happenings at home.
- "Let's Play!": the day care mothers supervise "free" playtime or other recreations.
- "Let's Explore!": outings to places where the children encounter new experiences.
- "Let's Eat!": this occurs after a short recess and involves preparations for lunch or a snack. The children clear the space and set the tables.
- "Let's Create!": includes painting, clay-modelling and other art work with paper and clay. Here, the children work in groups.

- Although it is not obligatory, the children usually nap for an hour after lunch.

- "Let's Go Home!": while preparing to leave, the children are reminded of what they have learned during the day and are offered suggestions on how to behave at home.

4. *The Activities of the Parent Associations.* The parent associations perform a number of important functions. Although they are not bound to any rigid schedule, the associations usually hold meetings each month to evaluate their work, adopt decisions and plan activities. The main tasks of the associations are to:

- Follow the policies and achieve the goals of the programme and make sure that all those involved in the programme meet their obligations. In fulfilling their function, the associations may adopt internal regulations.

- Pass, amend and observe bylaws.

- Direct and supervise the programme.

- Appoint managing and supervisory committees composed of people who do not sit on the boards of parent associations.

- Establish support committees consisting of other community members and the representatives of local organizations. These committees are to assure that the homes function properly. They also focus on efforts to improve local economic and social conditions and thereby raise living standards within the communities. These committees lend support but are not directly involved in programme management.

- Review and approve the report of the managing board on the activities of the parent associations.

- Identify the projects and activities to be developed by the managing board in pursuit of the goals of the associations.

- Determine the fees to be paid by the families participating in the programme, fix the contributions to be paid by the communities and devise a system for the collection of these fees and contributions. According to ICBF guidelines, parents are required to pay a monthly fee per child of no more than 25 percent of the daily minimum wage. This is to be used to provide the day care mothers with social security coverage.[16]

The associations offer parents ample opportunity to become active in the programme and thus acquire a voice within the community in keeping with their abilities and circumstances. The participation of parents guarantees that the programme provides high-quality day care which is appropriate to local needs.

The Role of Institutions

Community-based action would not be feasible without the help of institutions furnishing training, planning and technical support, monitoring and financial assistance. In the implementation of the programme, institutions perform the following functions:

1. *Training*. Any programme of this scope and complexity and in which community participation is so important must provide for intensive training. This programme relies on several techniques to guarantee on-going instruction. These techniques are based on direct, on-site teaching methods and employ teaching aids such as primers and video presentations.

Training is carried out in several ways.

- Women wishing to become day care mothers must attend a 40-hour workshop directed by staff from the ICBF zone centres. The workshops cover the main concepts in child health care, nutrition, development and community participation. Only the most promising candidates are selected to serve as day care mothers; others are picked to become day care assistants. The parent associations participate in the selection process.

This type of training is based on discussions on the topics examined in "The Comprehensive File", a study guide containing information on the major steps in child development. The topics include the characteristics and needs of children at the various stages of growth and development, the emotional relationship between children and adults, a child's perspective on objects, the role of adults in child development, organizing and running activities, managing time and space, preparing educational materials, community organization and good health and nutrition.

- "Work-study" groups have been created through the programme. These groups consist of day care mothers, parents and ICBF staff. The groups meet every 15 to 30 days to analyse and discuss the situation in nutrition, health and psychological and emotional development and local problems in caring for and supervising children. Each meeting is planned and conducted by a staff member of the local ICBF zone centre. The position of this staff member is known as "community education agent".

- These two main training procedures are supported by other techniques. Thus, workshops are held so that day care mothers can exchange ideas and experiences. Seminars and conferences are arranged for those interested in acquiring a more in-depth understanding of issues relevant to child survival and development. There is no systematic plan or schedule for activities of this type. The themes are extremely varied. The selection of topics hinges on

the particular concerns of the day care mothers and the initiative of ICBF staff.

- In some parts of Colombia universities and training centres have supported the workshops and other initiatives which enhance the efforts at furnishing on-going instruction.

2. *Programme Manuals.* Because of Colombia's regional and cultural diversity, the programme relies on special tools and guides for training and management to boost coverage and maintain proper organization. The ICBF has developed a wide variety of manuals and guides for use nationwide. In some regions additional programme manuals have been produced that are adapted to local social and cultural conditions.

The programme materials fall into several categories:

- Twelve training manuals have been developed through an agreement between the ICBF and the National Vocational Training Service (SENA). These manuals cover a variety of topics, including the identification of the needs of children, on-going training and instruction, methods for organizing day care homes, community participation and organization, the creation of a parent association, health care and good nutrition, accident prevention, food management, growth monitoring and nutrition and activity planning for under-2-year-olds and for 2-to-6-year-olds. Special video cassettes are also available on clay modelling, making toys with waste material and children's rhymes and songs.

- Programme manuals have been published on the nature and goals of the day care homes and the structure and operations of the parent associations.

- Additional manuals have also been prepared on other subjects, including child development, education projects in communities participating in the ICBF, children and cities and the promotion and practice of breastfeeding.

- Special manuals and pamphlets also exist for ICBF staff. These publications offer guidelines in areas such as the establishment and day-to-day management of emergency assistance centres, child care in special "open" environments, the structure and operations of auxiliary day care homes and the organization and administration of special institutions for the protection of minors.

3. *Relations with other Institutions.* Since their first appearance, the day care homes have benefited greatly from their links with public agencies and programmes. The benefits have included lower direct costs and the availability of the experience garnered in the community-based projects of many institutions. For example, the National Vocational Training Service has produced materials and offers special training courses for participating day care mothers and their communities. The Ministry of Education has played a role in several programme

initiatives in the area of the psychological and emotional development of the child. The Ministry of Health is responsible for furnishing preventive care and basic health care in day care homes. Through its child health monitoring project, called "Growth and Development", it is directly involved in the homes. Project doctors provide routine physical examinations for children up to age 6. During an examination a child's weight and height is measured as a gauge of nutritional status, and the child's intellectual and social development is estimated based on the Abbreviated Development Scale.[17] The children participating in the programme receive special treatment. They are examined at their day care homes by an outside health care team, and the results of these checkups are recorded on cards which have been designed especially for the programme. Whenever mothers visit public health care centres the nurses and auxiliary personnel advise them on the health, nutrition and psychological and social development of their children.

The Role of Nongovernment Organizations

Through formal and informal agreements with the ICBF, nongovernment organizations participate in various facets of the Programme for Home-based Community Day Care. Many of these agreements involve initiatives at the local level. Under ICBF planning, nongovernment organizations have become an important factor in the decentralization of management. Prior to the creation of the day care homes, many of these organizations had already gained recognition and acceptance within communities thanks to their projects. Some had become involved locally and had only to incorporate the programme into local projects.

Most of the nongovernment organizations take part in the programme by providing supervision or technical support to the homes. The ICBF assures that any outside management entity maintains predetermined levels of coverage and quality. Nongovernment organizations thus work as intermediaries between the ICBF and communities in many parts of Colombia. Some nongovernment organizations have helped in the development of technical material. Others have donated food and supplies. Nongovernment organizations have played a major role as supporters and promoters of the programme. They have also been important in guaranteeing a high degree of efficiency and quality. Consequently, they have been a key factor in the organization and expansion of the programme.

The participation of nongovernment organizations in the programme has not raised costs for the ICBF. The funds the ICBF would otherwise be spending directly on the

programme are simply transferred to the intervening nongovernment organizations. The day care homes offer these entities an opportunity to broaden their activities without increasing their existing infrastructure. Accordingly, in the areas where they are active nongovernment organizations are absorbing a large portion of the costs for administration, personnel and infrastructure that the ICBF would otherwise have to bear. This is another method which the ICBF uses to mobilize resources.

VI. THE SCOPE AND COVERAGE OF THE PROGRAMME

During its six-year history the Programme for Home-based Community Day Care has clearly had both a direct and an indirect impact on the living conditions of poor children and mobilized public opinion in favour of improving the situation of children.

Expansion

The programme has grown considerably, having served 112,000 children during the first year, 340,000 in 1988, 700,000 in 1989, 800,000 in 1990 and about one million by the end of 1991. This sums to an average annual growth rate of 198 percent. By late 1991 the programme was serving 83 percent of the target population of 1.2 million poor children.

Day care homes have been established throughout Colombia. They are located in the poor neighbourhoods of every city and in small towns, rural villages and even the most remote regions. Eighty percent of the country's municipalities are taking part in the programme, which unites communities in favour of children.[18]

Differences among communities and regions have not led to changes in the basic elements of the programme. The fundamental structural features, namely, a local mother providing day care to 15 neighbourhood children, routine methods of operation and Government support, are essentially the same nationwide. The diversity resides mostly in the recreational activities which the day care mothers employ to stimulate child development, the variety of foods and menus offered in the homes and the way the participation of the parent associations is organized. The fact that local preferences are followed in these areas has facilitated the acceptance of the programme.

Nonetheless, the programme has met with difficulties. A case in point is programme

implementation among native-American communities. Indians constitute slightly more than 1 percent of the population of Colombia and represent a wide variety of cultures and ethnic groups. The family structures, childraising patterns and needs in child care within these communities do not always coincide with the basic approach of the programme. Plans to employ the programme for the benefit of certain native cultures have had to be cancelled, and the ICBF has developed special approaches for these communities.

The use of day care homes is particularly suited to highly populated areas. The homes are thus more effective in cities than they are in the countryside. The distances from the homes of the children to the nearest day care home is not the only factor. Also important is the fact that extended families are still very common in rural areas, where relatives can usually be called upon to care for children whenever the parents must be away. In contrast, the nuclear family is more usual in cities, where the programme can provide much-needed support to working parents. The day care homes respond to a demand created by these changes in the structure of the typical family.

The goal of the ICBF is not only to reach 100 percent of the target population, but also to maintain and raise the quality of the services furnished through the programme. From 1992 to 1994 the programme is to be expanded gradually until it achieves total coverage.

Monitoring and Evaluation

The staff of the ICBF zone centres represent the key mechanism for programme monitoring and evaluation. Monitoring consists mostly of visits to the day care homes, although meetings and interviews with the day care mothers and the parents of the children are also frequent. Unfortunately, monitoring is not carried out on a regular basis throughout the country. Because commitment and technical capacity vary among the ICBF regional offices, some day care mothers suffer from a lack of programme monitoring and technical support.

The ICBF has several tools for the regular assessment of the health, nutritional status and development of the children who participate in the programme, but it does not always apply them in an appropriate, timely or systematic fashion. Frequently, the data supplied through assessment are not used to improve the programme.

An information technology system is being created for more consistent and intensive monitoring and evaluation. The system will be used to enhance programme capacity and efficiency. However, testing and installation have been time consuming, and the system has

not been yet completed.

From the beginning, the day care homes have attracted considerable interest. Various outside studies have been carried out to gauge their operation and impact. Programme evaluations are conducted each year, although they are not always equally extensive. In general these evaluations have highlighted the need for greater participation on the part of beneficiary families, higher quality training for day care mothers, improved monitoring and support and a functioning information system.

The Impact of the Programme

The findings of studies and other evaluations of the programme have been fairly consistent. Through nonformal methods, the ICBF in only five years has raised the coverage of the programme to nearly one million children. This contrasts with the coverage of 120,000 children that the ICBF achieved using formal methods during the 20 years before the community day care programme was created. This is an indisputable argument in favour of the day care homes.

That the programme reaches the poorest parts of the population is very important.[19] According to the most recent programme evaluation, 76 percent of the beneficiaries of the programme earn incomes per capita that represent less than one-third of the minimum wage. Only 21 percent of the families in the programme have incomes above the value of the earnings of two adults on the minimum wage; 51 percent have more than three dependents, and fewer than 30 percent of the heads-of-household have regular job contracts. One-fifth of the families are headed by women, and 37 percent of the heads-of-household are illiterate. Among the homes of all these families, 14.5 percent lack indoor plumbing, and 18 percent have dirt floors. The homes of 51 percent of the families are extremely overcrowded.

Fifty-two percent of the mothers supply more than one-half of the incomes received by their households, and 64 percent assume some economic responsibility for the home. Much of the earnings of these women can be linked to the programme, since access to day care for their children allows mothers more time for jobs.

1. *Child Health.* The most recent evaluation has found a relatively high morbidity rate among the children enrolled in the programme. The high rate is clearly due to the difficult conditions in which poor families live. During the two weeks prior to the evaluation, 43 percent of the children were suffering from respiratory illnesses; 19 percent, digestive

ailments; 5 percent, contagious infections, and 8 percent, skin diseases, while 2 percent were involved in accidents.

Although the vaccination coverage in Colombia is over 80 percent, only 38 percent of the children in the programme possess health care cards showing that the children have had the complete battery of shots. However, parents often misplace the cards.

Only 35 percent of the under-5-year-olds examined in the evaluation have been enrolled in the Child Growth and Development Programme, and only 14 percent of the children in the programme have received dental care.

These figures demonstrate that access to health care is unsatisfactory among children. Yet, it is important to remember that the target population is extremely poor and usually has no access to health care services of any type. The programme may be remedying the situation, but the evaluations are silent on the subject since they do not discuss the health status of the children prior to their enrolment in the day care homes.

2. *Child Nutrition.* An earlier evaluation found that approximately one-half of the children interviewed had achieved progress in nutrition and social development.[20] The most recent evaluation contains estimates of the nutritional status of children based on the two indicators commonly applied throughout the world: the ratio of height to age and the ratio of weight to height.[21] An analysis of the data reveals that child development is poor in terms of the height-to-age ratio. Development is slow among 21 percent of the children and retarded among 9.2 percent. As measured in terms of the weight-to-height ratio, relatively fewer children in the programme are suffering from acute malnutrition: 2.3 percent compared to a national average of 4.9 percent.[22] The weight-to-height ratio is normal among 95 percent of the children.

The socioeconomic position of their families is so critical to the nutritional status of children that the programme cannot aim to correct all nutritional deficiencies. Fifty-five percent of the malnourished children belong to the poorest families; 23 percent belong to families with a child over 5 years of age; 26 percent belong to families headed by an individual who is illiterate, and 30 percent live in homes without indoor plumbing.[23] The limited capacity of the programme to provide everything children lack because of the poverty of their families should be borne in mind.

The day care homes have had a positive effect on the awareness of parents concerning the importance of their children's eating habits at home. The evaluation conducted in 1990 showed that 14 percent of the families involved in the programme were not preparing

breakfasts or dinners for those of their children who were attending a day care home.[24] The most recent evaluation has found that the figure has dropped to 3 percent. On holidays, when the day care homes are closed, 99.2 percent of the families are providing breakfasts and dinners for all their children.

According to the latest evaluation, 75 percent of the families give their children some sort of snack between breakfast and lunch or between lunch and dinner. Fifty-four percent of the families interviewed reported that their spending on food had diminished after they had enrolled their children in the programme. However, the evaluation has also described the breakfasts and dinners served at home to children as "average" or "poor". Most of the families on inadequate diets are classified as "low income". This reflects the fact that serious nutritional problems can be linked to low household income and not just to poor eating habits as some have claimed. The results of the evaluation also demonstrate the need of parents for more awareness and training.

3. *Psychological and Social Development*. According to the evaluation of 1989, the mothers felt that their children had made progress in social development. The children's involvement in the programme was offering them the opportunity to talk with other youngsters. This was fostering more spontaneity and self-assurance among the children, who were also playing more and were more active. They were becoming better playmates and more integrated into society, and fewer arguments were occurring among them. Forty-three percent of the sample groups of children examined in a study in 1989 showed signs of greater psychological and social development.[25] Some children were displaying better personal hygiene and health care habits and more learning ability. Relationships between the children and adults improved as well. According to the children interviewed, the programme had reduced the incidence of child abuse. Children had become more important to the community and as a result were being treated with more affection and respect.[26]

These advances in psychological and social development have been corroborated in the latest evaluation. Children who spend more time at the day care homes are exhibiting more evidence of normal development than do children of the same age and family situation who are newcomers to the programme.[27] Likewise, as measured by every other indicator examined in the evaluation, such as motor response, hearing, speech and social development, the children involved in the programme perform better. The proportion of children exhibiting slow psychological and emotional development is higher among children spending less time at the day care homes and among malnourished children.

4. *Child Care.* The day care mothers interviewed for the 1989 evaluation felt that the most important result of the programme was the fact that children no longer have to be locked up and left alone at home while their parents are at work. Communities expressed satisfaction with the additional supervision of children, which was leading to a reduction in the number of accidents and the number of minors on the streets.[28]

For eight hours every working day a day care mother replaces the parent or other individual who would otherwise care for the child. Mothers whose children are enrolled in the programme have more free time and therefore more opportunities to earn income. The programme broadens a child's view of society by bringing the child into contact with a greater number and variety of care-givers. The care which the children receive at home is enriched because of the training imparted to parents through the programme.

Ninety percent of the families interviewed for the 1989 evaluation considered child care the responsibility of mothers but believed that other family members also play a role. The programme may be fostering greater awareness of the needs of children and the responsibilities of adults.

5. *Learning and the Social Environment.* Due to its wide coverage, the programme has provided training to a large number of day care mothers, auxiliaries and participating parents. The initiatives undertaken through the programme have been discussed by parents. There are now 66,000 day care homes and 66,000 trained and active day care mothers and an equal number of day care auxiliaries. Some day care homes have been closed for various reasons, but those people who have participated in running the homes or using the services of the programme have been provided with training aimed at instilling a better understanding of the nature of childhood, the needs of children and ways to foster child development. All these efforts at training and the experience garnered through the programme have led to changes in childraising and child care practices.

Colombia has a long history of violence. According to a nationwide survey, violent incidents occur in 85 percent of the nation's households.[29] These incidents range from verbal attacks to physical violence. Naturally, this violence has an effect on children.

The 1989 evaluation did not report on cases of child abuse among the participating families, but 20 percent of the day care mothers interviewed stated that they knew children in their communities who had been abused. The evaluation found that 30 percent of the parents interviewed did not openly express affection for their children. Only 10 percent of the mothers believed that children are incapable of learning until they have reached age 3.

In general, programme service users display a positive attitude toward children and consider them important to society. Ninety percent of the parents interviewed said that they play with their children. When adults play with children, not only are they reinforcing a mechanism for relating with the children, but they are also encouraging a capacity for affection in the children and stimulating child development.

A programme like this that is based on the learning experience and bolstered through concrete initiatives can help lay the foundations for greater respect for children's rights as a set of values and principles. Changing the way people think and the relationships within society takes time, much more time than the few years since the programme was first implemented. The evaluations show that the impact of the programme on the social and cultural environment is still limited, but that the programme is encouraging the first steps toward a new approach.

6. *Other Effects.* Home-based day care has made people more aware of neighbourhood problems and of the opportunity for action offered through the ICBF. This awareness has helped to expand coverage in other areas of ICBF activity, particularly the efforts to protect abandoned children and children at risk, whether physically or morally.[30]

The process to establish the day care homes has included several notable features: campaigns to mobilize families and communities in support of child care; a new leadership role for women, specifically as day care mothers, and the modification of traditional attitudes and behaviours on behalf of more balanced and harmonious relationships within families. The participation of parents and communities in efforts to improve housing, sanitary conditions and child health have been important, as have productive initiatives founded by community members and the interest generated in the programme for the sake of the progress of the community. According to one official publication, "the day care homes have planted the seed of real social development."[31]

The response of communities has been gratifying. The programme is instilling people with a sense of pride and confidence in their ability to improve living standards for themselves and their children.[32] It is proof of the administrative capacity of communities and sets an important example for other projects requiring administration and resource management by local populations.[33] The day care homes have facilitated the organization of day care mothers and given them an opportunity to exchange experiences among themselves and with similar organizations in other cities. These associations are also a source of inspiration for the activities undertaken by communities to resolve other problems.

Thanks to the day care homes, the ICBF has improved its institutional image and strengthened its presence among those in extreme poverty. As a social project, this is clearly one of the most far-reaching initiatives in the history of child care in Colombia. Like the vaccination campaign, which has been so successful in Colombia, the day care homes have built confidence in the social sector. The fact that this programme could be implemented and its goals achieved has paved the way for an even more ambitious child development strategy.

VII. COST ANALYSIS

The average total cost per child at a day care home is $298.18 per year, or $24.85 per month.[34] This seems high, until one takes into consideration the features and sources of financing of the programme. Moreover, a distinction should be drawn between the "economic", or "total", cost and the "financial" cost. The total cost is the sum of all the expenditures needed to carry out the programme. These expenditures include monetary outlays and compensation in labour and in kind. The contributions of the Government, as well as those of the private sector, fall into this category. In contrast, the financial cost refers to the contributions of the Government in terms of budgetary allocations measured in monetary terms. This includes direct allocations (those earmarked specifically for the programme through the ICBF as the managing agency) and indirect allocations (those originating with other public institutions). Based on origin, the resources required to implement the programme can therefore be divided into three groups. These are the ICBF, which manages all direct Government allocations, other public entities, which supply indirect allocations, and the communities.

Public Sector Outlays

In 1991 the direct and indirect financial contributions of the Government to the programme amounted to $10.76 per child per month, or $129.11 per child per year, and accounted for 43.31 percent of the total economic value of the programme. That same year international cooperation represented only a small portion of the total, 0.19 percent.[35] The remaining 56.5 percent was supplied by the participating communities.

1. The *direct financial costs* of the programme embrace all the recurrent expenditures incurred by the ICBF in carrying out programme initiatives, including outlays for

administration and for human resources at the national, regional and local levels. Also included are direct transfers from the ICBF to communities to buy food for the children, the allowances for day care mothers and other operating expences.[36]

During the 1991 fiscal year the direct cost of the programme to the ICBF was $9.44 per child per month, which is equivalent to $113.29 per child per year.[37] Covered by the ICBF, this represented 38 percent of the total (financial and nonfinancial) costs of the programme but 87 percent of the financial cost.

Of the total ICBF contribution, 4.2 percent was spent on administration, material for service units and training for the day care mothers and the ICBF personnel involved with the homes. The remaining 95.8 percent covered recurrent expenditure, including general expences (6.3 percent), human resources (35.6 percent), nutrition supplements (51.5 percent), the promotion of good health (0.6 percent) and supervision and technical support (1.8 percent).[38]

The ICBF passes along 83 percent of its total contribution directly to the communities, which use these resources to buy food for the children and equipment for the homes, offer credit for home improvement and pay the allowances to the day care mothers for their work.

2. The *indirect financial costs* are incurred in two areas: health care and special training for programme participants. The effort at care undertaken by the Ministry of Health through its regular services and its Child Growth and Development Programme is supported by municipal governments. This effort costs 44 cents per child per month.[39] The cost of the special instruction provided through the National Vocational Training Service is estimated at 44 cents per child per month. The other expences incurred by the Government through public entities other than the ICBF amount to 43 cents per child per month. Two-thirds of these expences are covered by regional health departments and municipal governments.[40]

The indirect financial cost represents almost 13 percent of the total financial cost. Unlike the expences of the ICBF, the Ministry of Health and the National Vocational Training Service, the indirect cost does not include any incremental expences, since in this case existing services are used to support the day care homes.

The Contribution of Communities

Communities furnish volunteer labour, nonmoney goods and some infrastructure. Because of its nature and because of the fact that it does not constitute a Government outlay, virtually no accounting records exist on this community contribution. It has therefore frequently been

difficult to weigh the contribution of communities alongside that of other sources. Since this item cannot be calculated, the tendency exists to underrate or overrate its value.

For the purpose of this analysis, the input of communities has been reckoned using currency values which are based on market prices in the informal sector of the economy. For example, the minimum wage has been employed to assign a monetary value to the work of community volunteers.[41] Likewise, market rents for comparable properties have been used in estimating the value to the programme of the homes provided by the day care mothers.

Such an analysis yields a value for community contributions of $14.04 per child per month.[42] These contributions embrace various elements, the most important of which is human resources, specifically the work of the day care mothers, their auxiliaries and the parent associations.[43]

The time provided by the day care mothers (less their allowances), their auxiliaries and the parent associations which administer the programme accounts for 92 percent of the value of community contributions. The other 8 percent includes the economic value of the use for the programme of the homes of the day care mothers, the payments received by the day care mothers for home improvements to meet safety and sanitary regulations, the monthly fees paid by participating parents to provide social security coverage for the day care mothers, and other minor outlays.[44]

The parent associations are each estimated to spend 40 hours per week carrying out administrative and supervisory duties for the homes and purchasing food for the children. This translates to one week's work at the minimum wage, or 40 cents per child per month.

Sources of Financing

The Government's capacity to summon and rely on various sources of financing has been decisive to the programme. Currently, tax money accounts for 89 percent of the resources of the ICBF. The other 11 percent comes from employer contributions and financial operations involving assets of the ICBF. The ICBF earmarks 47 percent of its total budget for the day care homes. The homes also benefit from one-third of the 3 percent payroll contribution to the ICBF from public and private companies with more than 50 employees or sufficient capital to qualify as enterprises in the modern economy (see earlier). This amounted to more than $100 million for the programme in 1990.

Plans call for the ICBF to allocate 55.8 percent of its budget to the day care homes and

other types of preschool care in 1994. A search is on for new sources of financing such as the gambling tax, which, according to Law 10/1990, is scheduled to total 40 percent of all the proceeds from gambling on sports. This revenue would go entirely to the programme.

The Cost Implications

The total programme cost may seem excessive, but it is really quite low compared to the cost of similar programmes. Although the total cost is high, the fact that only about 43 percent is represented by Government outlays is positive, as is the fact that the managing agency, the ICBF in this case, is responsible for only 38 percent of the total cost. The rest is absorbed by entities which can use their installed capacity to support the programme. The added cost attributable to the participation in the programme of these other entities is very low. The day care homes are thus helping to optimize the use of installed capacity by expanding the access to services, such as public health care, which existed long before the programme.

Most of these financial resources, including the 38 percent provided by the ICBF, would not have been assembled without the programme. This is also positive. An excellent example is the contribution of private companies that is calculated on the basis of the payroll.

Communities take part in the programme on such a broad scale and in such a notable manner that their contribution covers 57 percent of the total cost. This is very positive. Unlike top-down approaches, community participation has an important "redistributive" effect. The programme has generated a wide-ranging process of human-resource training and created sources of revenue previously unavailable to the income groups involved.

Many argue that community participation merely represents a way for governments to avoid paying for certain services. In any case, it should be noted that the governments of Third World countries and those of many industrialized nations have been unable to assure universal social service coverage. The current trend is for governments to concentrate more on promotion and coordination. Users are being expected to shoulder greater responsibility in paying for social services. In this sense, the day care homes offer a practical solution. The community contributions in the form of work and compensations in kind represent a feasible way for low-income groups to pay. This can be critical for governments hesitant to spend much on preschools or for nations with only limited resources. It can also be critical if social spending is being cut and services are being privatized because of economic adjustment.

Because of community participation, the Colombian Government saved $131,430,000

in 1991. These savings were used to intensify the programme.[45] Thus, in a sense, communities have done the most to facilitate the expansion of home-based day care.

Such an ambitious programme could probably never have been launched without the resources made available by so many. Expansion would have been impossible, or much more limited. Instead, though on a small scale, the cofinancing scheme has helped reduce social inequity by giving a greater number of normally marginalized children access to a preschool programme of this type.

The Programme and Economic Adjustment

In 1987, when the day care homes were created, Latin American governments were adopting structural adjustment measures. These measures led to cutbacks in public spending in the social sector and the privatization of many public services. However, the Colombian Government did not immediately become involved in any intense adjustment process; instead, it was at grips with a war on poverty. Later, when the Government did begin to apply structural adjustment more comprehensively, the day care homes were not affected. Indeed, plans were developed in 1992 to cover, by 1994, all those living in poverty.

The day care homes actually represent a means to blunt some of the possible negative effects of a process of structural adjustment. This is so because the programme initiatives are designed to improve the nutrition, health and psychological and social development of young children. Improvements in these areas also tend to enhance a child's readiness for primary school. Within its policy of favouring openness, the Colombian Government has maintained a priority on nutrition, health, education and jobs. The ICBF programme has already proven its usefulness by providing mothers with more time to earn income.

VIII. THE ROLE OF INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION

A number of international organizations have lent their support to the programme. UNICEF backing, approximately $1.5 million over five years, has been used primarily to implement and enhance the programme. However, perhaps even more important than this financial contribution has been UNICEF's role in providing technical assistance, expediting the transfer of technology from other countries, backing the nonformal approach to child care, carrying

out evaluations and maintaining pilot projects. UNICEF's contributions to the efforts in training, management and monitoring have been substantial. Its assistance in drafting the latest evaluation helped achieve a balanced point of view, which facilitated the acceptance by the ICBF of the recommendations offered in the document.

The Netherlands has furnished technical support and financed the construction of a regional training centre. This support has been provided through Government bilateral cooperation and the Bernard van Leer Foundation.

The ICBF incorporated $1,026,000 from a World Bank loan into its budget for 1990 in order to meet the requirements of the home-improvement component of the programme and undertake studies on the Comprehensive Preschool Care Centres and the dietary supplement known as "bienestarina". In 1991 over $6 million were earmarked for these same areas, as well as for the expansion of the information system of the programme and for improvements in the training of day care mothers, the managing boards of parent associations, shopkeepers and communities at large.

To match the World Bank loan, the ICBF and the Colombian institution charged with furnishing loans for low-income housing signed an agreement to increase the line of credit available to day care mothers for home improvements. The fund contained $9.8 million and enabled the Government to strengthen and expand the programme without reallocating resources from the national budget.[46]

While international financing was not a major factor in the initial implementation of the Programme for Home-based Community Day Care, the outlook may be more positive for comparable programmes in other countries because of the success of the Colombian experience. The day care homes have attracted the interest of international organizations, and other governments are negotiating the financing for similar initiatives.

IX. NEW STRATEGIC ELEMENTS

The success of home-based day care has opened the way for plans for an even more ambitious strategy. The ICBF wishes to guarantee that the *Comprehensive Preschool Care Centres (CAIPs) continue to fulfil their technical role*. In order to improve the effectiveness and efficiency of its initiatives as part of a new policy approach, the Colombian Government at one time was considering closing these centres in view of the coverage being achieved through the day

care homes. Expence was the main concern, since the cost per child of the provision of care at one of these centres was more than twice the corresponding cost at a day care home. However, the cost was not a strong enough argument to force the closing of these centres.

First, an effort to close the centres would have met with serious opposition from labour unions and management, which consider the CAIPs their acquired right. Second, the 1,155 CAIPs serve 188,000 2-to-7-year-olds in Colombia.[47] The coverage of the CAIPs has remained relatively stable, but expanding this coverage is considered difficult given the formal approach of the centres. However, the CAIPs have gained considerable experience in community work and benefit from a highly qualified staff.

In many regions of Colombia the CAIPs have played an important role in the programme by assisting in the selection of day care mothers and day care homes and in training, planning, monitoring and the provision of technical support. Numerous ICBF zone centres, which furnish technical support to the day care homes, are located at CAIPs. Indeed, it would have been difficult to expand the programme so quickly without these facilities.

Consequently, planning for the CAIPs is being undertaken in light of an objective which goes beyond the provision of day care for preschoolers. Now, the aim is to assure that the principal function of the centres is to furnish assistance in planning, training and the development of technical skills to the day care homes and other nonformal projects.

The day care homes are not the answer for all children. The ICBF is *diversifying its approaches to child care.* It has realized that under-2-year-olds cannot be supervised properly at these homes if older children are being cared for at the same time. This has led to the creation of the Child and Family Care Programme (FAMI), which focuses on day care for under-2-year-olds. FAMI has achieved substantial coverage in only a short time.

The day care homes and the FAMI programme are especially adapted to the needs of those children who would otherwise lack supervision because adults must be away from home. They are ideal for the children of working parents. However, not all youngsters remain alone while their parents work. For them, care outside the home for eight hours each day is not necessary. Nonetheless, their families may need other kinds of assistance. For this reason, the ICBF also supports additional child care services that have been established by regional offices in response to local circumstances. Many of these services are based on local practices which are relatively longstanding. In all of them, family members provide the care, and the ICBF helps the care-givers monitor the nutrition, health and development of the children. These services emphasize the community component, training for parents and the

use by parents of existing service infrastructure. They require less money, and any operating costs borne by the Government are minimal, since these services aim at developing the resources and the potential of communities.

In another project the ICBF is planning an educational programme on child development that will be aimed at parents and will rely on the media.[48] UNICEF is supporting the project.

After several years of experience, the ICBF has set itself the task of not only expanding the Programme for Home-based Community Day Care, but also implementing a more well-rounded strategy in the provision of preschool care. This strategy is based on offering care which is tailored to the income levels of families and the age, need for supervision and surroundings of the children. It calls for the creation of a system of child care services that relies on several forms of care, makes efficient use of efforts and resources and reaches all children living in poverty.

The experience gained in establishing the Programme for Home-based Community Day Care has clearly enabled Colombia to devise a child care strategy which is truly ambitious in terms of design and the goals in coverage.

X. THE PROGRAMME AND THE RIGHTS OF THE CHILD

Although the day care homes existed before the signing of the Convention on the Rights of the Child, there is a close relationship between the programme and the convention. This relationship is particularly important for developing countries, where the search for resources for social programmes is no easy task. Its low cost, the makeup of its financing, its impact and its broad coverage render the approach adopted in the home-based day care programme an attractive method for providing preschool care. Surely, the same principles can be applied in other types of programmes designed to guarantee the rights of children.

The *Preamble* to the Convention on the Rights of the Child outlines ideas and contains acknowledgements of and references to other conventions and universal principles that reflect a certain philosophy toward the treatment of and care for children.[49] This philosophy could form the foundation of an environment favourable to children. Among other principles and ideas, the preamble refers to:

- The primary values and principles that should guide each child's growth and that

each child should learn to respect: peace, dignity, tolerance, freedom, equality and solidarity.

- The full and harmonious development of each child's personality and the preparation of each child for life in society.

- Protection and assistance for the family, which is the natural environment for child growth and development.

- The importance of tradition and cultural values in the protection and development of children.

- The importance of international cooperation in efforts to improve living standards.

The day care homes clearly embody these ideas and principles. This paper describes programme features which tend to foster relationships and types of care that are more equitable, more decent and more supportive than was once the case. Due to its educational component and because it satisfies several basic needs, the programme is helping to improve the chance for more peace and tolerance. Equality of opportunity is not easy to achieve; yet, like other social-service initiatives, the day care homes enhance the ability of children to lead active lives, because the homes attempt to offset some of the inequality in opportunity that arises from poverty. Thus, in a very restricted domain, the programme has reduced the gap between the children of informal-sector workers and those of workers in the modern economy. The concept of integrated child development embodied in the programme goes hand-in-hand with the principle of the "full and harmonious development of a child's personality" expressed in the preamble.

Through its educational activities aimed at parents, the programme strengthens and prepares the family so that the family can provide better child care. The programme has recognized the importance of employing and developing approaches to day care that reflect regional and ethnic differences (see earlier). This also represents a link between the programme and the preamble of the convention. International cooperation benefits the programme by providing resources and easing the transfer and exchange of knowledge.

The programme is in compliance with *Article 3*, number 3 of the convention. This part of the article deals with the responsibility of the state to assure that the institutions and services providing child care meet appropriate safety and health standards and employ adequately trained staff. The regular programme evaluations and all the efforts to improve the programme are evidence of a vision which is similar to the one behind this article.

The link is particularly strong between the programme and *Article 4* of the convention. Article 4 declares that states "shall undertake all appropriate legislative, administrative and

other measures for the implementation of rights...." Regarding economic, social and cultural rights, states shall undertake such measures "to the maximum extent of their available resources and, where needed, within the framework of international cooperation." This reference to resources could be interpreted strictly in economic terms. However, not many governments on their own would be able to finance a preschool programme which could achieve universal coverage without jeopardizing other social programmes. If the government is the only source of financing available for an effort to comply with Article 4 and if this source is limited, then compliance would mean that other needs of children cannot be adequately met. While governments can free up a great deal of fresh resources for children's programmes by reallocating funds, the problem is not merely an economic one.

The programme consists of a combination of legislative, administrative, economic and community initiatives which are supported by an ingenious method for mobilizing internal and external financial resources and which represent a realistic response to the demand for total coverage. The programme demonstrates that compliance with Article 4 of the convention is possible in the difficult realm of child care and development.

The day care homes comply with a number of convention articles on improving the living conditions among children. For example, *Article 6* addresses the right to life, which is important in the programme as well. According to the article, "states parties shall ensure to the maximum extent possible the survival and development of the child." The programme contains features which are pertinent to this goal, and programme evaluations show that progress has been made in child survival and development.

Article 27 declares that "states parties recognize the right of every child to a standard of living adequate for the child's physical, mental, spiritual, moral and social development." The day care homes focus on this goal in dealing directly with the children and their parents. This is in line with another part of Article 27 that declares, "states... shall take appropriate measures to assist parents and others responsible for the child to implement this right...."

The programme entails efforts to enhance medical care, nutrition and preventive care, as stipulated in *Article 24*, which stresses the "right of the child to enjoy the highest attainable standard of health and to facilities for the treatment of illness and rehabilitation of health." The programme puts children in contact with existing health services by maximizing service access and guaranteeing children priority attention (see earlier). It also partly complies with the statements on nutrition in the same article. Indeed, the original goal of the programme was to assure the timely delivery of nutrition supplements. Despite the shortcomings in this

area revealed in the latest evaluation, the nutrition component may become more efficient once improvements are made in monitoring and in the training of parents.

According to *Article 28*, "states recognize the right of a child to education...." The programme helps to prepare children for primary school and facilitates their integration into the education system, thereby reducing the number of dropouts.

A major objective of the day care homes is the proper development of every child's talents, personality and physical and intellectual abilities. The programme attempts to achieve this by concentrating on stimulating the child's awareness and understanding, as stipulated in *Article 29*. According to this article, education should be oriented toward the "development of the child's personality, talents and mental and physical abilities to their fullest potential" and the "development of respect for the child's parents, his or her own cultural identity, language and values...." Viewed in its entirety, the programme considers human development as a social and cultural process based on the family and the community.

In keeping with the Convention on the Rights of the Child, the day care homes represent an attempt to create the conditions children need to exercise their right to live in an atmosphere of affection and protection, under the care and guidance of their parents and other adults and with good food, nutrition and free access to adequate health care and educational services to help satisfy their basic needs. The programme recognizes that children have rights and helps them to develop their own view of the world and their relationship to it. It inspires children through play, inquiry and the learning experience so that they can develop their abilities to the fullest and become active members of society.

These "New Ethical Standards" in favour of children try to encourage the development of every boy and girl so that, regardless of their cultural diversities and individual differences, they may exercise their right to good health, proper nutrition, optimum psychological and social development, respect, on-going care and protection against harm. Home-based community day care follows these same principles.

XI. CONCLUSIONS AND OVERALL RECOMMENDATIONS

Several considerations which could be significant to any country wishing to undertake a similar initiative are revealed by an analysis of the programme, as well as by the various programme evaluations.

The Importance of Groundwork

Before the existence of the programme, the ICBF managed a service network for children that included regional offices throughout the country. It was able to use this network to expand the programme and achieve broad coverage rapidly. It had also acquired valuable experience in nonformal approaches to preschool care, such as those adopted in Cartagena and Bucaramanga, as well as in formal approaches, such as the Infant Centres. These initiatives were undertaken in low-income areas, where ICBF staff became familiar with the communities in which the day care homes would eventually be developed.

Earlier projects in Ecuador and Venezuela have also served as a guide.

Community organizations concerned with social development have a long tradition in Colombia. This has rendered programme management, implementation and supervision much easier. In turn, the day care homes augment the capacity of communities in these areas.

The skill and encouragement offered by organizations like UNICEF, combined with the experience of communities and nongovernment organizations, have helped the ICBF to realize that an initiative of this scope is possible.

Rights and Needs

When the programme was being planned, the Convention on the Rights of the Child did not yet exist. The people involved in the programme, including ICBF staff, personnel from other institutions and other individuals, had no idea they were applying the precepts of a nascent convention. The purpose of the ICBF was to meet the needs of children. Now, it has been realized within the ICBF and the Government that the day care homes also represent an excellent means for recognizing the rights of children. This view has been expressed officially, and Colombians are coming to think of the day care homes in terms of the rights of children. The signing of the Convention on the Rights of the Child, the ratification of the convention by Colombia and the inclusion of child rights among the rights recognized in the new Constitution of Colombia are helping to strengthen and preserve the ICBF programme.

Political Determination

The programme has enjoyed the concrete political and moral support of both the president

and the ICBF staff. Indeed, the director of the ICBF was the programme's most ardent fan and took it upon himself to guide almost single-handedly the establishment and development of the day care homes, rather than assigning the task to mid-level staff.

Political determination is significant when it goes beyond mere verbal declarations. Political will is effective when the desire to act leads to the tools, resources and circumstances for action. In the present case, the initial demonstration of political will was the allocation of public funds and the passage of a law permitting the use of private sector resources.

However, the will and decisiveness of the policymakers have been only one factor. The approach has not been top-down. The law on the use of private resources was passed only after lengthy negotiations among the major players in the formal sector of the economy: labour unions and the leaders of industry and trade who are represented on the ICBF managing board. Despite an occasional disagreement, these people have been able to come together to foster an atmosphere conducive to substantive negotiations. They have helped the Government define a national policy and a programme for all children in need of protection.

Today, the participating communities, parents and day care mothers are the strongest supporters of the programme. They are very active in trying to raise public awareness and guarantee the future of the programme.

The Impact of the Nonformal Approach

The adoption of a nonformal approach toward the expansion of coverage represented a breakthrough within the ICBF. ICBF staff had to become familiar with the needs of communities and adapt to new perspectives on the problems and new methods of decision-making, planning and implementation.

This unconventional approach favours a greater appreciation for their own culture among children and communities. For the children, the day care homes are similar to their own homes. They have not been artificially created through massive investments in infrastructure. The day care mothers are not so different from the children's own mothers, and the children remain in their own communities.

Formal approaches requiring considerable capital are difficult to apply on a large scale. When the economic support is limited and the scale is smaller, the formal approaches come to resemble artificial solutions.

A large number of the parents who are sending their children to the day care homes

have jobs in the informal sector of the economy, but another good portion are employed in the modern sector. This coming together of people from different backgrounds within the poorest segment of the population helps to reduce, even if only in a limited fashion and within a relatively restricted group, the potential for segregation in society.

Mobilizing Society

A main buttress of the programme is the ability of the ICBF to combine the efforts of various Government agencies, secure the financial support of the public and private sectors, bring in nongovernment organizations and foster intense community participation. This has all been possible because of the just nature of this appeal on behalf of children. Solutions to the complex problems facing poor children are beyond the resources and capacity of any individual group or institution. Programmes of this type are thus forced to call on and rely on a variety of partners. This requires a willingness to negotiate, patience and a recognition of the abilities of others. The programme has been possible because these principles have been observed and because the ICBF clearly recognizes the importance of the contributions of others, particularly those of communities.

Community Participation

So extensive is the participation of communities in the programme and so numerous and important are the programme activities in which communities are involved that the real involvement of communities in programme management at the local level is virtually guaranteed. By using the services offered by the programme and by making important contributions, communities assure that the programme will be maintained.

The programme evaluations stress the need to encourage community participation so that local people can become involved in every stage of planning, implementation, monitoring and evaluation.

The Effects of Rapid Expansion

Countries are accustomed to projects which appear highly effective and promising but which are probably not feasible for wide-ranging application. People tend to be skeptical of pilot

or experimental projects. Given the seriousness of their problems and the speed at which these multiply, developing countries need ambitious programmes like this one in many areas of the social sector.

The day care homes represent an ambitious approach in terms of coverage, the participants it attracts, the areas of child development it affects, the resources it assembles and the complexity of the planning, implementation and monitoring it involves. Much of the programme's success has been due to the confidence and respect with which people have gradually come to view the programme over the years. However, up to now this credibility has been generated because of the rapid pace at which the programme has been expanded. The average rate of growth of the programme, estimated at 198 percent annually, has provided the visibility and inspired the confidence necessary to assure the social mobilization required for continued progress. The programme's large scale and rapid growth, coupled with the good quality of the results, have been very persuasive of the programme's value.

A Single Approach with Local Variations

The programme attempts to improve local conditions while respecting cultural differences. Nonetheless, the day care homes represent a unified approach. The application of this single approach throughout the country has not been easy because of cultural and socioeconomic variations. The programme has therefore been adapted to specific social and cultural conditions in regions and at the municipal level. This has turned out to be a boon and enriched the programme substantially.

The Variation in Methods

The application of a single overall approach has been decisive in achieving the coherence, energy and vitality necessary to implement the programme on a national scale. However, evaluations suggest that several methods of providing care are required. These various methods should be combined creatively into a technique which reflects the objectives and principles of the programme but which is flexible enough to respond to the many special circumstances facing children and their families. The various methods must all fit within an integrated strategy of child development.

Direct initiatives should be supported by public awareness campaigns which rely on

the media, including radio, television and the press, as well as on creative applications of alternative channels of communication, to draw people into efforts to spread knowledge about and understanding of child development.

Because the methods used in providing care can be adapted to the specific needs of children, the marginal cost of care can also be reduced.

On-going Training

An on-going effort at training has been undertaken within the context of the programme. The intense instruction furnished to all who are involved in the programme, from the participating parents to members of the community at large, demonstrates the extent to which the day care homes depend on this effort. Without training, the impact of the homes would be limited and of no permanent importance.

The programme evaluations stress the need to maintain the training component. This component should be combined with a support service provided by technical experts. The involvement of professionals who are at the start of their careers or who are fulfilling public service requirements could greatly improve the quality of this aspect of the programme.

Monitoring and Evaluation

The monitoring and evaluation of the various initiatives undertaken through the programme should be an integral programme component. All those who are associated with the programme, including parents, the day care mothers, community workers, technical experts and the directors of participating public entities, should be involved in this component. The installation of a computer-based information and monitoring system is important for the continued growth of the programme. This system would allow the ICBF to assess accurately the progress of the programme and make appropriate and timely adjustments.

Financing and Shared Costs

The Government has been able to pursue and sustain the broad coverage of the programme thanks to the three financing strategies which have been employed (see earlier): the sharing of responsibility for the programme among various public agencies and the participating

communities, reliance on the ability of the Government to reallocate or otherwise secure the public funds necessary for the programme and the use of the contributions based on a percentage of the payroll of enterprises in the modern sector of the economy.

Despite the general strain on resources, the Government believes that, because of the effectiveness of these strategies, the programme can achieve universal coverage over the medium term without depending on an unreasonable amount of support from the public budget. Since other institutions have assumed some of the responsibility for programme financing and operation, the ICBF has been able to target its resources more efficiently toward an expansion in the number of users.

The importance of community involvement in the financing of the programme is unquestionable. The total cost is shared almost equally between the Government (43.3 percent) and the participating communities (56.5 percent). The programme therefore represents a good example of an effort at cofinancing by a government and the citizens of a country. It is important that those capable of providing resources be active in the design, direction and management of such a programme. This has been the case with the business and labour leaders who have acquired a sense of commitment to the home-based day care programme and who have come to identify with its goals.

It is encouraging to know that ingenious ways exist to raise the resources needed to provide poor people access to services which would otherwise be beyond their means. The smooth operation, growth in coverage and feasibility of the programme have depended on the success of the effort to distribute the financial burden.

All of these conditions are unlikely to be present if similar experiences are initiated in other countries. However, many of these conditions have emerged as the programme has made headway and demonstrated success in focusing on the poor, boosting coverage, carrying out community work and keeping costs down. These achievements have generated visibility and credibility, which in turn have attracted more support and financial backing and created more favourable conditions for programme implementation. Programmes of this type benefit from a multiplier effect as additional resources and political support foster further development and progress.

ANNEX: PROGRAMME COSTS
(Per Child, In Dollars, 1991)

Level	Government				Community	International Cooperation		Total	%
Entity	ICBF	Ministry of Health	Transfers	SENA*		UNICEF	N.L.		
				Operating Costs (including depreciation)					
General expenditures									
National level	0.33	--	--	--	--	0.10	--	0.43	0.14
Regional level	2.38	--	--	--	--	0.06	--	2.44	0.82
Day care homes	5.44	--	--	--	--	--	--	5.44	1.82
Home property	--	--	--	--	9.75	--	--	9.75	3.27
Home improvement	--	--	--	--	5.54	--	--	5.54	1.86
Equipment	1.00	--	--	--	--	--	--	1.00	0.33
Teaching materials	1.66	--	--	--	--	--	--	1.66	0.56
				Human Resources					
Training	0.64	--	--	5.30	--	0.28	--	6.22	2.09
National-level personnel	0.28	--	--	--	--	--	--	0.28	0.09
Regional-level personnel	2.05	--	--	--	--	--	--	2.05	0.69
Zone Centres	4.80	--	--	--	--	--	--	4.80	1.61
Local programme management	--	--	--	--	4.90	--	--	4.90	1.64
Day care mothers	30.77	--	--	--	58.77	--	--	89.54	30.03
Auxiliary personnel	--	--	--	--	89.54	--	--	89.54	30.03
Supervision and consultancy	1.00	--	--	--	--	0.08	--	1.08	0.36
Other**	0.16	--	--	--	--	--	--	0.16	0.05
CAIPs***	2.26	--	--	--	--	--	--	2.26	0.76
				Outlays for Nutrition and Health Care					
Food	55.09	--	--	--	--	--	--	55.09	18.48
Bienestarina	4.70	--	--	--	--	--	--	4.70	1.58
Health promotion/supervision	0.73	5.30	5.22	--	--	0.03	0.02	11.30	3.79
Total	113.29	5.30	5.22	5.30	168.50	0.55	0.02	298.18	100.00
% by entity	38.00	1.78	1.75	1.78	56.50	0.18	0.01	100.00	--
% by level		43.31 (38.00 direct + 5.31 indirect)			56.50		0.19	100.00	--

* The National Vocational Training Service. ** Per diems, etc. *** Comprehensive Preschool Care Centres.

NOTES

1. The italics have been added by the authors of this paper.
2. UNICEF (1991), page 40.
3. UNDP (1992), page 43.
4. UNICEF (1992), page 2.
5. Himes (1992).
6. For example, see Myers (1992).
7. DNP et al. (1989).
8. Patiño et al. (1992), page 282.
9. Colombia has been very flexible in adapting or developing innovative approaches toward social progress. The "Escuela Nueva" ("New School") is an example from the area of education that has attracted considerable interest in other countries. It focuses on greater participation, fewer dropouts and better teachers, and its methods are based on the principles of the so-called "active school". Eighty percent of Colombia's rural schools have now adopted these methods, which include less demanding school workloads, adjustments in the school year to take harvest time and other important extramural activities into account, the adaption of curriculums to local needs, modifications in the pace of teaching to accommodate the learning capacity of individual pupils and encouragement for student participation in school government and the involvement of parents and communities in school affairs.

   "Supervivir" is another example. Carried out through the health care system, this programme consists of activities undertaken by students in the last two years of secondary school to meet their credit requirements. Each student "adopts" two or three poor families and spends time with the parents in order to share with them information and other materials about child survival and development that have been prepared especially for the programme. The students review vaccination records and counsel families to take their children to the nearest health care centre for regular checkups.

   National vaccination campaigns for universal child immunization are also important. Colombia was one of the first countries to use the media to encourage parents to have their children vaccinated at immunization stations on fixed days. Involving the intensive use of radio, television and the press, along with the mobilization of human and financial resources in the public and private sectors, the three annual "vaccination days" that were instituted in Colombia have now been adopted as a regular part of immunization campaigns in various countries around the world.
10. UNICEF (1992), pages 72-3.
11. Law 27/1974.
12. The ICBF had already produced and tested a high-protein, high-energy nutrition supplement called "bienestarina".
13. Law 89/1988.
14. The Colombian National Family Welfare System is a service network for protection and care that is employed by the ICBF to assist target populations.
15. Several nations are attempting to repeat the Colombian success. The programme has in effect become a "model" project, and programme facilities have been visited by the representatives of Latin American, African and Asian countries.
16. ICBF (1990a), page 102. The additional fees required by parent associations vary widely throughout the country. However, they are usually quite low and correspond to the ability of parents to pay.
17. The Abbreviated Development Scale is a method of measuring the psychological and emotional development of a child that has been created especially for Colombia with UNICEF support. See MOH(b) (1990).

18. Office of the President of Colombia (1990), page 101.
19. ICBF, UNICEF and World Bank (1992), pages 28-33.
20. ICBF (1989), page 11.
21. ICBF, UNICEF and World Bank (1992), pages 50-5.
22. MOH(a) (1990).
23. ICBF, UNICEF and World Bank (1992), pages 37-40.
24. ICBF (1990b).
25. ICBF (1989), page 15.
26. ICBF (1989), page 11.
27. ICBF, UNICEF and World Bank (1992), page 66 et seq.
28. ICBF (1989), page 11.
29. Profamilia et al. (1991), page 170.
30. ICBF (1989), page 6.
31. Office of the President of Colombia (1990), page 11.
32. Office of the President of Colombia (1990), page 125.
33. Office of the President of Colombia (1990), page 125.
34. This cost analysis is based on data supplied by the ICBF and the costs outlined in the latest programme evaluation. Additional estimates have also been used in carrying out the analysis. For the convenience of the reader, this section provides only a global analysis of costs. National averages have been used, since expenditures vary from one region to another.
35. The contributions supplied through international cooperation reached a peak during the first years of the programme. The programme no longer requires so much international assistance. The ICBF has received a World Bank loan to enhance the programme. However, this loan has not been included in the cost analysis since bureaucratic hurdles have delayed the allocation of these funds until the year following the period covered here.
36. No detailed information is available on the costs involved in starting up the programme, and this item has been omitted from the analysis.
37. Two percent of this amount represents the indirect costs incurred by the ICBF in providing other services for the day care homes. An example of these other services is offered by the Infant Centres.
38. The nutrition component is clearly significant in terms of the allocation of resources.
39. This estimate is based on information contained in the relevant agreement between the ICBF and the Ministry of Health and in the "plan of action" for the programme.
40. The total average cost of this type of health care is estimated at $11.27 per child per year. Most of this cost (93.1 percent) is covered on an equal basis by the Ministry of Health and the municipalities; the ICBF contributes 6.5 percent, and international cooperation (UNICEF and the Dutch Government) account for another 0.4 percent.
41. The assignment of a market value to volunteer work in programmes relying on community participation is not backed by a consensus among experts in public policy analysis. The decision to adopt this tactic here has been based on the following:

- The programme is targeted at marginalized urban dwellers with very low incomes, and many of the families are working in the informal sector.
- The daily earnings of workers in the formal sector are fairly high. They depend on the area of activity within the sector.
- The minimum wage is the only feasible benchmark of average income available for gauging the "opportunity cost" of programme participants from the informal sector.
- A formal approach to the provision of day care would require the hiring of staff to supervise the children.
- Assigning a minimum-wage equivalent to volunteer work in a nonformal child care scheme highlights the fact that the public funds saved by such a scheme can be redirected toward the expansion of coverage.

42. It should be remembered that the day care offered by the private sector costs around $14 per family per month. This is too expensive for most of the target households. On the other hand, volunteer work, the donation of nonmoney goods and most of the components of the programme furnished by communities as a whole, and not necessarily by the participating families, represent feasible and affordable ways to guarantee the delivery of child care. Furthermore, unlike the alternatives in the private sector, the programme supplies up to 70 percent of the daily nutritional needs of the children.

43. This estimate is based on an analysis of what these individual people would earn if they were working at regular jobs instead of receiving allowances or simply volunteering their time. These "forgone" earnings are usually referred to as the "opportunity cost". This approach has been criticized frequently. Some say that it is too hypothetical, since people who perform community work of this sort often have no chance for regular employment. While this may be relatively true, the approach does give an idea of the real economic cost of the programme, or at least the cost of the programme if job conditions were to change on the labour market. It also gives an idea of the expences the Government would incur if the day care mothers were to demand and obtain wages in line with current pay levels. Moreover, the programme has created sources of income for women by offering them the opportunity to serve as day care mothers or auxiliaries. This source of income for women did not exist before the programme.

44. A closer look at the community contributions shows that the day care mothers account for 44 percent. There are several reasons for the willingness of these women to participate in the programme. The most obvious is the economic benefits the women enjoy, including an allowance of $465 per year, social security coverage, home improvement loans and up to $82 per year to pay for public utilities. Moreover, the families of the day care mothers are reportedly using some of the food provided through the programme. Other noneconomic benefits include the appreciation of the communities and the chance to assume a position of leadership. In any case, job opportunities are limited, and the programme offers an allowance which is close to the minimum wage.

45. Of the $88,374,000 provided by the ICBF, 15.5 percent came from the contributions of employers in the modern sector. These contributions were equivalent to 3 percent of the payroll of these employers. The rest of the amount provided by the ICBF had been allocated through the national budget.

46. The processing of the World Bank loan and the matching funds has encountered bureaucratic tangles. For this reason, these monies have not been included in this cost analysis. The responsibility to pay back this "soft" loan has yet been assumed by the Colombian Government. It is anticipated that the communities may absorb much of the debt service and repayment obligations.

47. This estimate is based on the data available in June 1992 in the management information system, Planning Office, Systems and Information Division, ICBF.

48. The Venezuelan Ministry for the Development of Human Intelligence rapidly developed the Family Programme between 1979 and 1983. The Family Programme was the first of its kind to rely on the media to educate parents on the importance of stimulation in early childhood development. A large amount of educational material was produced and circulated through the programme. This material was systematically organized around the themes of the psychological and emotional development, health and nutrition of the child at each stage of its growth. The programme had an important impact in terms of the awareness and understanding of the Venezuelan public and is believed to have been beneficial to relationships between parents and their children.

49. UNICEF (1990), page 43 et seq.

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